

Message Text

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ACTION AGR-20

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 EB-11 COME-00 TRSE-00 SS-20

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3361

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E.O. 11652: N/A

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SUBJECT: FIELD OBSERVATIONS MOSCOW-OREL-KIEV-KHARKOV-ZAPOROZHE-
SIMFEROPOL, OCTOBER 18-22, 1973

DEPARTMENT PASS AGRICULTURE

1. SUMMARY:

ASSISTANT AGATTACHE A. PAUL DANYLUK TRAVELED BY
CAR MOSCOW-OREL-KIEV-ZAPOROZHE-SIMFEROPOL OCTOBER 18-22, 1973.
WINTER GRAIN SOWING WELL UNDERWAY. MOST FIELDS MEDIUM LATE
PLANTED BUT WELL ESTABLISHED AND PROGRESSING SATISFACTORILY.
LITTLE CORN AND SUNFLOWER STILL TO BE HARVESTED. SOIL MOISTURE
PROGRESSIVELY LESS ABUNDANT IN SOUTHERN PORTIONS OF TRIP.
END SUMMARY.

2. GRAINS: WINTER GRAIN SOWING APPEARED WELL UNDERWAY IN AREA
JUST TRAVELED. QUALITY OF GRAINS GENERALLY GOOD AND PROGRESSIVELY
BETTER ON WAY TO KIEV, POLTAV AND ZAPOROZHE. MOST GRAINS WERE
MEDIUM LATE SOWN, PROBABLY IN SEPTEMBER, AND HEIGHT AVERAGED
BETWEEN TWO AND THREE INCHES. FEW FIELDS OBSERVED WERE
EARLIER PLANTED AND THEIR HEIGHT RANGED UP TO FOUR-FOUR AND ONE-HALF
INCHES. ALL WINTER GRAIN FIELDS OBSERVED, WITH VERY FEW
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EXCEPTIONS, HAD GOOD, THICK GROWTH, WERE CLEAN, EVEN AND HAD

GOOD COLOR. ONLY ON FEW OCCASIONS HEAVY GROWTH OF MUSTARD IN WINTER GRAIN WAS OBSERVED WHICH WAS UP TO SIX INCHES TALL AND BLOOMING. HAD IT NOT BEEN FOR GRAIN IT WOULD APPEAR THAT THE FIELDS HAD BEEN SOWN WITH MUSTARD SEED. BETWEEN ZAPOROZHE AND SIMFEROPOL WINTER GRAIN FIELDS OBSERVED WERE OF POORER QUALITY, MORE SPOTTY AND THINNER. THE FIRST IMPRESSION THAT THESE GRAINS WERE SOWN VERY LATE WAS NEGATED SOMEWHAT BY FACT THAT SOIL MOISTURE THIS AREA WAS OBVIOUSLY DEFICIENT WHICH COULD HAVE BEEN MAIN REASON FOR RETARDED GROWTH. ANALYSIS OF NEARLY 600 RECORDED OBSERVATIONS INDICATES ABOUT 40 PERCENT OF FIELDS SOWN TO WINTER GRAINS.

3. LARGE NUMBER OF FIELDS OBSERVED DURING TRIP WERE PLOWED AND WORKED. ALMOST WITHOUT EXCEPTION FIELDS WERE SMOOTHLY CULTIVATED, CLEAN AND WITHOUT WEEDS. AS IN THE CASE OF WINTER GRAINS, MAJORITY OF PLOWED AND WORKED FIELDS WERE PROGRESSIVELY MORE NUMEROUS FROM HALF WAY BETWEEN OREL AND KIEV SOUTH TO SIMFEROPOL. THE FEWEST FIELDS IN THIS CATEGORY WERE OBSERVED FROM MOSCOW TO OREL. ASSUMING PLOWED AND WORKED FIELDS ARE SOWN TO WINTER GRAINS, THESE, COMBINED WITH THOSE IDENTIFIED AS WINTER GRAIN, ACCOUNT FOR TWO-THIRDS OF RECORDED COUNTS.

4. PLOWED AND STUBBLE FIELDS: MAJORITY OF PLOWED FIELDS WERE LOCATED MOSCOW-OREL LEG, FOLLOWED BY KHARKOV-ZAPOROZHE. MOST FIELDS APPEARED PLOWED RATHER THAN DISCED. MUCH STUBBLE WAS EVIDENT INDICATING NO OTHER WORK HAD BEEN DONE THESE FIELDS. PREDOMINANCE OF PLOWED FIELDS IN FIRST PART OF TRIP NO DOUBT DUE TO DELAYED HARVEST AND INABILITY TO WORK FIELDS FURTHER DUE TO SETTLING OF WET WEATHER. EXTENSIVE NUMBER OF PLOWED FIELDS IN KHARKOV-ZAPOROZHE AREA MIGHT HAVE BEEN PRIMARILY DUE TO DRYNESS AND RELUCTANCE TO SEED THE FIELDS UNTIL MORE SOIL MOISTURE AVAILABLE. INTERESTINGLY, IN THIS AREA PLOWED FIELDS WERE MORE NUMEROUS THAN PLOWED AND WORKED FIELDS. STUBBLE FIELDS WERE DOMINANT IN THE MOSCOW-OREL PORTION OF TRIP. IN ZAPOROZHE-SIMFEROPOL RUN STUBBLE FIELDS WERE ALSO NUMEROUS. LATE HARVEST AND INCLEMENT WEATHER PREVENTED PLOWING IN FORMER AREA WHILE IN LATTER AREA CONSERVATION OF SOIL MOISTURE APPEARS TO BE MAJOR REASON FOR LEAVING FIELDS IN STUBBLE. IN AREAS RECORDED AND ANALYZED, FIELDS THAT WERE ONLY PLOWED PLUS THOSE LEFT IN STUBBLE ACCOUNTED FOR APPROXIMATELY ONE-THIRD OF TOTAL COUNT.

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5. ROW CROPS: ALTHOUGH FIELDS WITH UNHARVESTED SUGARBEETS WERE ENCOUNTERED THROUGHOUT TRIP THEY WERE COMPARATIVELY FEW AND ACCOUNTED FOR LESS THAN FOUR PERCENT OF TOTAL COUNTS RECORDED. IN MOST INSTANCES FIELDS WERE BEING HARVESTED, EITHER MECHANICALLY OR BY HAND. THERE WERE MOUNDS OF BEETS IN FIELDS AND WORKERS WERE SEEN HAND TOPPING HARVESTED BEETS. MOST TRUCKS OBSERVED TRANSPORTING SUGARBEETS WERE ENCOUNTERED BETWEEN OREL-KIEV

AND KIEV-KHARKOV. NEARLY IN ALL INSTANCES BEETS COMING FROM FIELDS APPEARED QUITE MUDDY. AVERAGE SIZE OF BEETS WAS NO MORE THAN THREE INCHES ACROSS TOP AND ABOUT SIX TO SEVEN INCHES LONG. TWO COLLECTION AREAS WITH HUGE MOUNDS OF BEETS WERE OBSERVED, ONE NEAR A RAILROAD TRACK AND ONE IN AN OPEN FIELD. MOUNDS NEAR RAILROAD WERE SPRAYED WITH WHITE SUBSTANCE.

6. EXCEPT FOR MOSCOW-OREL PORTION, UNHARVESTED CORN FIELDS WERE ENCOUNTERED ALL LEGS OF TRIP. MOST EXTENSIVE AND LARGEST FIELDS, HUGE IN SOME INSTANCES, WERE ENCOUNTERED BETWEEN KIEV-KHARKOV. ALMOST ALL FIELDS HAD PARTIALLY HARVESTED STRIPS WHICH MIGHT INDICATE THAT WORK WAS DISCONTINUED OR INTERRUPTED, POSSIBLY DUE TO RAIN. DESPITE FAVORABLE WEATHER CONDITIONS WHICH PREVAILED DURING TRAVEL IN THIS AREA VERY LITTLE FIELD WORK WAS OBSERVED. EARS OF CORN TESTED WERE DRY AND READY TO BE HARVESTED. OF TOTAL RECORDED COUNT, UNHARVESTED CORN FIELDS ACCOUNTED FOR THREE PERCENT OF TOTAL. WITH THE CORN HARVEST PRACTICALLY COMPLETED, THE REMAINING LARGE FIELDS, IN OBSERVER'S JUDGMENT, MIGHT BE THOSE ORIGINALLY INTENDED FOR SILAGE BUT LEFT TO MATURE FOR GRAIN. (SOVIET PRESS IN RECENT WEEKS HAS STRESSED FACT THAT SINCE MUCH HIGHER THAN EXPECTED YIELDS OF SILAGE WERE BEING RECEIVED MANY FARMERS DECIDED TO LEAVE ADDITIONAL CORN-FOR-SILAGE ACREAGE TO MATURITY AND HARVEST IT FOR GRAIN. PRESS HAS ALSO EMPHASIZED, SINCE START OF HARVEST, THAT CORN (GRAIN) WILL MAKE MAJOR CONTRIBUTION TO THIS YEAR'S TOTAL GRAIN HARVEST IN THE UKRAINE.) ONLY TWO TRUCKS TRANSPORTING CORN WERE ENCOUNTERED ON ENTIRE TRIP. THE SIZE OF CORN EARS WAS COMPARATIVELY SMALL, NO MORE THAN SIX TO SEVEN INCHES LONG.

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7. UNHARVESTED SUNFLOWER WAS OBSERVED ONLY BETWEEN ZAPOROZHE-SIMFEROPOL. THE FIELDS WERE USUALLY LARGE BUT FEW IN NUMBER. A NUMBER OF FIELDS HOWEVER WERE IDENTIFIED AS HARVESTED SUNFLOWER FIELDS.

8. SOIL MOSITURE: SOIL MOISTURE FOLLOWING THE ROUTE OF TRIP CAN BE COMPARED WITH A GRAPH STARTING AT THE TOP WITH SUPER ABUNDANT MOISTURE AND PROGRESSING TO DEFICIENT AT THE BOTTON OF THE SCALE. THE SUPER ABUNDANT CONDITION PREVIALED FROM MOSCOW TO HALF WAY POINT BETWEEN OREL-KIEV. THIS AREA WAS BEING REPLENISHED BY STEADY RAIN TO OREL AND SNOW FROM OREL TO A POINT HALF WAY TO KIEV. FROM THIS POINT ON TO KIEV AND FROM KIEV ALMOST TO POLTAVA SOIL MOISTURE WAS ABUNDANT AND WELL REFLECTED IN THE GOOD APPEARANCE OF ALL WINTER GRAINS. APPROACHING POLTAVA AND CONTINUING ON TO ZAPHOROZHE SOIL MOISTURE APPEARED TO BE ADEQUATE. EVIDENCE OF RECENT RAINS APPEARENT BUT NOT IN GREAT ABUDNACE. NO SIGNS OF DISTRESS ON ANY CROPS, PASTURES OR GRASS ALONG ROAD TO INDICATE SOIL MOISTURE DEFICIENCY. IN COMPARISON TO PRECEEEDING RUN, SOIL MOISTURE WAS, HOWEVER, LESS ABUNDANT. SOIL MOISTURE BECAME DEFINITELY DEFICIENT AND PROGRESSIVELY MORE SO BETNEN ZAPOROZHE AND SIMFEROPOL. FIELDS WERE DRY,
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ROADS MORE DUSTY, AND WINTER GRAINS WERE NOT AS LUSH, WITH EXCEPTION OF FEW IRRIGATED FIELDS. IN SUMMARY, 98) .98 5743
2- 7034-ABUNDANT MOSCOW-HALF WAY KIEV; ABUNDANT HALF WAY KIEV-POLTAVA; ADEQUATE HALF WAY KIEV-POLTAVA TO ZAPOROZHE, AND DEFICIENT ZAPOROZHE-SIMFEROPOL.

9. LIVESTOCK : LARGE NUMBER OF CATLE, GRAZING ON STUBBLE, MEADOWS, AND ALONG ROAD ON OPEN WOODED AREAS, OBSEEVED. SOME HEARDS ESTIMATED TO BE ONE HUNDRED OR MORE HEAD. MOST WERE DAIRY, BLACK AND WHITE, AND SOME RED STEPPE. MOST CATTLE ENCOUNTERED ON FIRST THEE LEGS OF TRIP, FEW ON FOURTH, AND NONE ON LAST. MOST CATTLE APPEARED FAIR TO GOOD.

10. MISCELLANEOUS: HARVESTING AND TRASNPORTATION OF CABBAGE OBSERVED TO BE IN FULL SWING IN FIRST AND THRID LEG OF TRIP. CABBAGES OBSERVED ON TRUCKS WERE EXCELLENT WITH SOME HEADS RANGING IN SIZE FROM SEVEN TO NINE INCHES IN DIAMETER. A FAIR AMOUNT OF "FRESH COLE SLAW" OBSERVED LYING ALONG SIDES OF ROAD. ALTHOUGH NO POTATO

HARVESTING NOTED IN FIELDS, TRUCKS WERE SEEN TRANSPORTING MUDDY AND POOR QUALITY, SMALL POTATOES. A FEW HEMP FIELDS , IN THE OREL-KIEV RUN, WERE OBSERVED. IN SOME FIELDS HEMP WAS HARVESTED, TIED IN BUNDELES AND STACKED, OTHER FIELDS WERE UNHARVESTED. THE CLIMATE AND SEASON OF THE YEAR WERE WELL REFLECTED IN FRUITS BEING SOLD ALONG THE ROAD, APPLES IN THE NORTH AND MELONS IN THE SOUTH.
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